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MARGARET SWAN CHENEY

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MEMOIR OF MARGARET SWAN CHENEY

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OF

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Mrs Edmund Dow Littlehale Cheney

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TO

THE RELATIONS AND FRIENDS

WHO HELPED TO MAKE HER SHORT LIFE SO BLESSED AND SO BEAUTIFUL,

THIS MEMOIR IS AFFECTIONATELY AND GRATEFULLY DEDICATED BY

HER MOTHER.

Forest Hill Street,
Oct. 22, 1888.

MEMOIR

OF

MARGARET SWAN CHENEY.

MARGARET SWAN CHENEY was the only child of Seth Wells and Ednah Dow Cheney. She was born in the old homestead at South Manchester, Sept. 8, 1855.[1] Very soon after her father's death we returned to Boston, and lived at No. 94 Chestnut Street. The child's pet name was Daisy. We had been in France just before her birth, where Marguerite is the common name of that flower. She was a very sweet, engaging child, loving and affectionate, easily managed, and with very quick perceptions. Once or twice when very young she showed a power of reading others' thoughts by speaking aloud words which were in my mind, but which could have no meaning to her. Her health was generally good, and she was very fond of outdoor life, rolling and shovelling in the snow, and rejoicing in the keen

[1] For picture of this house, for genealogy and early history of the family, see Memoir of Seth W. Cheney, pages 1–9, and for circumstances of her birth, page 128.

"William de Norwich, or de Cheney, received the estate of Blytheburgh in the county of Suffolk from Henry II. He left it to his daughter Margaret, who had a right to all wrecks thrown up on the shore, the proceeds of a ferry, and certain tolls." No connection is traceable between the families, but the coincidence of name is interesting. See "History and Antiquities of County of Suffolk," by Alfred Suckling.

air of winter. Although never timid, she was careful, except when excited by the presence of another child whom she would follow into danger. She was always fond of the pictures and casts in the room, and loved to imitate the attitudes of these figures when taking her nightly gymnastics. She had a large slate on which she drew with chalk according to her fancy. She once made a suggestive design. A little girl with a cloak buttoned at the throat stood by a guide-post, such as she had seen at the crossings in country roads. No other object was in sight, but the slate was dotted all over with white chalk to represent a snow-storm, and the effect was very pathetic.

Her first school instruction was from Dec. 6, 1859, to April 7, 1860, in a little class of three children, — Eleanor May, Eva Channing, and herself, taught by my cousin, Sarah A. Smith. Among other things she learned simple geometrical forms, and on seeing an arched gateway, she said, "There 's a horizontal line with a semicircle over it!" She attended Dr. Lewis's gymnasium, and was skilful in all the exercises. She delighted in her "Mother Goose," from which she made apt quotations, such as, "Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?" on seeing a very dark old negro-woman.

Margaret entered the first kindergarten school established by Miss Elizabeth P. Peabody in Winter Street, in November, 1861, and continued in the school when it was removed to Pinckney Street and Miss Corliss aided in its care. She never lost her love for her venerable teacher. During long summer visits to South Manchester she often attended the school of her father's cousin, Miss Jane Cheney, which she enjoyed very much. It was a delight to her to be with her little cousins in school as in play. She had a quick, apprehensive intelligence, and it was a pleasure to teach her. She

preferred what she called "a studying school" to the kindergarten. She was a very happy child, and had such an affectionate relation with her little cousins that she did not seem to suffer from her orphaned state. One of her teachers said of her, "She is the one child I ever saw who did not show that she was an only child." Her father was a real presence to her; and once, on a little child saying to her, "You have no father," she replied, "I have a father in heaven." She would look to his portrait for sympathy and approbation, and shrink from opening the daguerrotype case if she were conscious of wrong. She was always reserved, and would not defend herself if unjustly accused.

On Sundays it was our habit to read the Psalms with any friends who chanced to be with us. Margaret's cousins and Mrs. Channing and Eva were often of the party. The youngest first chose her favorite psalm, and Daisy could only follow the words on the book as I read for her; the others followed in turn, the elders choosing last, and thus the older persons were enabled to select a new psalm and extend the list. The children would often beg to read a few more of their favorites after the round was completed. On one occasion we read in the chamber of a sick friend, who gave the children ripe grapes as a communion feast. The most memorable time, however, was a beautiful Sunday morning at Jefferson Hill, in 1862. Our dear friends the Mary Shannons and Mrs. Lydia Parker were with us. We sat by a little running stream, and the elders engaged in reading and conversation, while the children bathed and played in the brook. Then they sat down by us, and all joined in the reading; and the very imagery of the Psalms was before us. We "lifted our eyes unto the hills;" we were "beside the still waters;" we saw "the sheep and cattle on a thousand hills;" we were "treading the green pastures;" and we felt

the presence that was in all this beauty even as the Psalmist of old had done. The grown people never forgot that hour, and I believe it colored the children's lives.

Margaret's favorite text was, "Be still, and know that I am God." She often chose the One Hundred and Thirteenth Psalm; but it was the grand chorus of praise in the last psalm with which the children loved to conclude. I afterwards read the Bible to her as a book of great value, omitting unimportant or unsuitable chapters. She enjoyed the history very much, but was greatly amused with the extravagant stories of the Old Testament. When she and her friend Eva heard the account of Jesus directing Peter to find a penny in the mouth of a fish, they simultaneously exclaimed, "Why, it does not tell us whether he found it!" — a commentary throwing much light on the disputed passage.

Margaret had a great deal of religious faith and feeling, but seldom talked about it. She never seemed to be troubled by any doubts, but lived and worked in the light of the truth as it came to her. She never belonged to any outward church, or attended service regularly. When a little girl, she took a fancy to go with me to the Twenty-eighth Congregational Church, but was rather restless during the long sermons. I said, "Why do you like to go to meeting? you are very restless there." "I like to get out," was her reply.[1] James Freeman Clarke, M. Coquerel, David A. Wasson, and Samuel Johnson were the preachers in whom she felt most interest. She never had any fear of death, but sometimes said she was glad she belonged to a short-lived family, and hoped not to have a suffering and useless old age.

A part of two summers spent at Athol gave her the great delight of life on a farm, with rides in a hay-cart, berrying parties, etc.

[1] "Constraint that sweetens liberty."

She was deeply interested in the war, and her little fingers were busy in drawing lint, braiding thread, or stringing buttons for the soldiers. She attended the concert on the day of the Emancipation, and never forgot the enthusiasm of the occasion. She also visited the camp of the Fifth Cavalry Regiment at Readville, and enjoyed the singing of the men on the day they left for the seat of war; and she cheered the colored regiments, as they passed through the town, until her little head was dizzy.

One of her earliest benevolent interests was the New England Hospital for Women and Children. She always loved to go and see the babies. When the house in Pleasant Street was opened in 1864, she had a little kitten which she sold for the benefit of the hospital, and in every succeeding fair she was busily engaged. Her special interest was in the fern-table, and she at first assisted, and afterwards took the chief part with her cousins, in the arrangement of hundreds of ornamental transparencies and other devices sold there. Miss Lucy Goddard was always president of the table, and Margaret took great delight in working with her, she "learned so much" from her unrivalled skill in floral and decorative art. At the fair in 1881 she took the principal part, in connection with the apothecary of the Dispensary, in preparing the first pharmacy table. Her mechanical ingenuity found ample scope in such work. She often visited the children's ward, and amused the little sufferers, and she had a warm friendship for the physicians of the institution.

In May, 1863, we removed to Jamaica Plain, and for some months had a pleasant home in the family of Mrs. S. E. B. Channing. Margaret began to go to what the children called "a studying school," kept by Miss Lane in Eliot Hall. She walked a mile to school, but at first had Eva for a companion, and in winter her dearly beloved sled was almost a

friend. She was very fond of winter sports, and expert in all athletic exercises, such as coasting, sliding, and skating. She was, a little later, an enthusiastic croquet and tennis player. During the summer she began to learn to row at Eastern Point, Gloucester.

In February, 1864, we removed to the house on Forest Hill Street, which was Margaret's home during the rest of her life. She was fond of working in the garden, preferring the harder work of digging the beds, cutting down small trees, burning the grass, etc., to more dainty occupations. She was fond of animals, and always had a pet cat, and occasionally birds, the gifts of friends. She also had a regular carpenter's bench and chest of tools, and made many simple, useful articles, such as fern-cases, knife-trays, cutting-boards, boxes, etc. She was also fond of sewing, and skilful with her needle. In 1865 her cousin Harry Cheney came to live with us and attend school. He was a delightful companion, and they shared work and sport together, — liking the care of the hens, the carpentry-work, and the shovelling of snow rather better than the dancing-school. He was with us six years, and she had in him the delight of a brother's love and fellowship. She was very early interested in chemistry, trying simple experiments, such as the precipitation of camphor and the effervescence of acids and alkalis, and was jokingly called "the professor of chemistry."

I decided to send Margaret to the public schools, believing that she could obtain a more thorough education there than anywhere else. She entered the second division of the first class of the Hillside School, Nov. 9, 1868. At first the surroundings were very strange, and she was unhappy. It was left entirely to herself to decide, at the end of a week, whether she would continue there or go to a private school, and on the following Monday she went of her own accord to school,

and returned radiantly happy, saying school was "first-rate." She always expressed great satisfaction with the instruction received there, especially in arithmetic. With the exception of a few months' absence, fully approved by the teacher, she remained at the Hillside School, and graduated June 28, 1870, aged fourteen years, nine months.

In the autumn of 1870 she entered the Eliot High School at Jamaica Plain. She was a little older than the average of those entering the school, and her standing by examination was said to be the highest ever reached. She valued the instruction of the principal, Mr. Howe, and of Miss Lothrop, the head assistant. History and science were her favorite studies. She did not excel in languages, which she always learned more readily by ear than from books. She rarely brought her lessons home to study, but learned them well by attention during the allotted hours at school; and then she enjoyed the freedom of home. Her lessons did not worry her, and I did not think the course at school prejudicial to her health. She made there many pleasant friendships. In the spring of 1872, however, she had some trouble in her eyes, and it was thought best for her to give up study for a while. For several weeks she devoted her mornings to housekeeping, taking charge of the cooking of the family. Some attempts at scientific housekeeping were made; but after the ruin of two expensive thermometers in testing the heat of the oven, she returned to the old method of putting her hand in. She excelled in all housework, and thoroughly delighted in practical work. She was fond of the theatre, and during these years had frequent opportunity of gratifying her taste, as her cousin Arthur Cheney was proprietor of the Globe Theatre. She enjoyed private theatricals, and often acted in little plays at our own house, beside aiding in charades, etc., at Manchester, and managing little plays for the children there.

In 1869 we spent a few days with some dear cousins at the light-house on Thatcher's Island. Margaret enjoyed the novelty and beauty of the situation intensely, and here formed that friendship for Mrs. Maria H. Bray which was a blessing to her to the latest day of her life. She took great interest in my little story, "Faithful to the Light," founded on an incident in Mrs. Bray's experience.

In the spring of this year 1869 we took a memorable journey. By the wish of the New England Freedman's Aid Society, Miss Lucretia Crocker and I visited the freedmen's schools under their care, and Margaret accompanied us. It was a great refreshment to the teachers to have a visit from a bright, sunny girl, and she formed lasting ties of affection with many of them, while the colored people felt delighted at her sympathy and interest. She was utterly free from any prejudice against the negro, or any caste feeling, and went among the people as simply and naturally as among her own relations. The children brought her flowers, and young lads serenaded her, and she saw and enjoyed all this new and strange phase of life; while the companionship of so superior a woman as Miss Crocker, whom she dearly loved, and whom she aided in keeping the accounts of the journey, was always elevating and delightful. She thought it great fun when we were turned out of a boarding-house for inviting a colored gentleman to sit down in the parlor, rejoicing that she should have an adventure to write to her grandmother and aunts. She always counted this the richest journey of her life, and never lost her interest in the people she thus visited. At the yearly festivals of freedmen's teachers she was an active worker, and with her young companions Eva Channing and Eleanor May, took the bouquets of flowers from the chairman and distributed them to the teachers.

The summer at Woodstock in 1870 gave her the great

enjoyment of the Franconia scenery, and a good opportunity to learn driving. She was a brave and expert driver, and never failed in any emergency. She was less fond of horseback riding, as she suffered from it for several days. A few days spent at Newburg, N. Y., with her father's dear friend, Henry K. Brown, and his wife, were full of exquisite artistic pleasure. I shall never forget her dreamy enjoyment of the scenery of the Hudson as we glided over the smooth waters.

She was fond of music, and at an early age delighted especially in the music of the Catholic Church. She took lessons on the piano from Miss Dwight, and afterwards in singing from various good teachers; but she did not acquire satisfactory skill in music, probably from not devoting sufficient time to practising. She was a member of a Choral Union in West Roxbury, and took part in the Peace Jubilee in 1872. She extremely enjoyed practising the great oratorio music. The orchestral concerts were always a delight.

In the summer of 1872 Margaret spent several weeks among the relations of her Grandfather Littlehale, at St. John, N. B. She enjoyed the novelty of the life there, and the grand scenery of the river and tide. She liked going out in a rough fishing-boat to catch fish or "bob for eels." A trip to Digby, N. S., gave her a pleasure never forgotten. Here she "astonished the natives" by her courage and skill in rowing.

In the autumn her cousin Louise Cheney came to spend the winter with her, and under the instruction of Miss Augusta R. Curtis, Margaret studied Latin, Vegetable Physiology, and Chemistry. In the following spring Miss Alexander, Miss Lucia M. Peabody, and Miss Cora Clarke formed a class with her for chemical laboratory work in a small attic room. They worked here for two seasons, going through

Eliot and Storer's General Chemistry, and supplementing the lessons of the Lowell Institute by extra laboratory work in Quantitative Analysis and Mineralogy. She took lessons of Mme. Brazier in drawing, and was making good progress, but was obliged to give up the work on account of increasing trouble in her eyes. So severe did the pain become, that in 1873 she put herself under the care of Dr. Derby, who recommended a course of gymnastic reading, beginning with one minute and going on to two hours, three times a day. She pursued it faithfully, but it did her no good, except that she learned that she could use her eyes six hours a day without injury. By his direction she read only very light literature, and had quite enough of it. She heartily enjoyed the novels of Scott, Dickens, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell, etc., but she spent very little time in ordinary novel or magazine reading. When a child she was fond of the best poetry, especially Milton's; but in later life it was hardly her taste, although she never lost her appreciation of fine things. She delighted in seeing Shakspeare acted, and in reading the same plays afterwards, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" being her favorite.

In the summer of 1873 we spent seven weeks at Goulds-borough, Me., with the Channings and Misses Curtis and Graupner. The simple primitive life was entirely to her taste, and here she became interested in the study of ferns. She began a collection of New England ferns, which she made complete, and to which she added many foreign specimens. She enjoyed walking and rowing to the utmost. A few days at Mt. Desert, and a short visit to her grandmother and aunts, then at North Conway, completed a rich summer. In the autumn we went to the West, and she had a sight of Niagara. We went to Detroit, Chicago, Ann Arbor, Dubuque, and St. Louis, and in all these places we visited pri-

vate families, and she had an opportunity to know and love the great West. She was very fond of travelling, and was thoroughly capable in managing all the plans and affairs of a journey. We made a similar journey in the spring of 1875, spending most of the time in Detroit and Chicago.

The summer of 1874 was passed partly at York, Me., and partly at Royalton, Vt., where she had great pleasure in the country life, and in botanizing with her friends Miss Lucy Goddard and Miss Peabody. This recalls a striking trait, — her enjoyment of the society of her elders. I often had to urge her to fulfil her social duties toward her young acquaintances, but she was always ready to visit my old or invalid friends, and this not from kindness, but from pure inclination. No storm would keep her from going where her presence carried joy and comfort.

A few weeks at Swampscott in 1875 were especially enjoyable, as we had Mr. Arthur Cheney's house, where we lived in very independent fashion, mostly on fish, bread, and blackberries, and with many pleasant visits from friends. In the autumn Margaret joined a class at the Lowell Institute in Lithology, and had some field excursions with them.

The Centennial year was marked by severe family bereavements. A visit to her cousin Mrs. Platt, in New York, had been planned in March, and we stopped at South Manchester on the way. During the ten days we remained there her cousin Emily, much older than herself, but very dear to her, died of pneumonia, and a few days after, her beloved Uncle Ward died of the same disease. On the day of his funeral we were summoned home to my mother stricken with paralysis, who died in a week. She was Margaret's only grandparent, and the relation had always been most tender and loving. During her illness another cousin, Caroline, whom she had known less, also died. This was her first experience

of close and deep bereavement. While very tender and sympathetic, Margaret was brave and calm in the time of sorrow and trouble, and always seemed to be more occupied in mitigating the grief of others than in indulging her own. She was not very emotional, and lively outward expression in words was not natural to her. She was a help and strength in every time of trouble, and was not so much self-sacrificing, as unconscious of self in her love and care for others. The summer was spent at Willow Cottage, Magnolia. Her Cousin Knight's family and other friends filled the house, and she thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful place, which became as a home to her. Children loved her very dearly, for she never wearied in efforts to please them. In her pocket were generally found bits of soft pine, from which she cut for them little boats or other toys. One little girl, whom she amused this summer through the tedious hours of scarlet fever, said, "When I grow up I shall dress dolls for little girls, just like Daisy."

In the autumn we went to the Centennial Exposition and Women's Congress at Philadelphia, being kindly entertained at private houses during the two weeks spent there. Margaret especially enjoyed the rich treasures of the mineral world and the agricultural displays. A few days were spent at the Delaware Water Gap, and a week or more at Syracuse, N. Y. On our return we spent two nights with Professor Mitchell at Vassar, and were much interested in the college. Unfortunately clouds prevented her looking through the telescope.

A receipt for tuition at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is dated Nov. 2, 1876. Margaret became a special student of Chemistry, and worked in the Women's Laboratory under the direction of Mrs. Richards. She made a study of nickel, and was fortunate enough to discover "a

new and ready method for the estimation of nickel in pyrrhotites and mattes." Experiments testing this suggestion were made with Mrs. Richards, who published an account of the work in the American Journal of Science and Arts, Vol. XIV., September, 1877, generously giving her young assistant full credit for her share in it. The paper was translated for a German scientific periodical. She was a member of the Appalachian Club, and greatly enjoyed the excursions to Monadnoc, Wachusett, etc. In 1876, with some members of the Club, she made a memorable excursion to Mt. Adams, then little visited, and camped over night near the summit.

In May, 1877, we went to Europe. Her two aunts, Mary F. and Helen P. Littlehale, and two of her schoolmates, the Misses Williams, accompanied us. The summer was spent in travelling in Ireland, England, Scotland, Holland, Belgium, Germany, etc. Margaret was very fond of travelling, and heartily enjoyed the trip. She took charge of laying out the route, and of finding the way about cities by maps. She also kept the accounts of the party. She was not fond of letter-writing, and as she was always unable to use her eyes freely in the evening, she has not left a voluminous correspondence even of this time. She acquired languages readily by ear, and would often make her way in speaking better than those who knew more. A month was spent in Paris in the autumn, and then we went to Italy, which was full of charms for her. She had a rich enjoyment in art, and made an interesting collection of photographs. At Florence she took lessons in Italian and singing. Our residence in Rome was terribly saddened by the illness and death of her dear Aunt Helen, for whom she ever had a profound admiration and affection. One of her friends says, "I shall never forget Margaret's expression at that

time, — so full of feeling, yet so calm and strong." She was in Italy at the death of Victor Emmanuel and Pius IX., and saw both lying in state in Rome, and she attended the levee of Leo XIII. Sitting by her aunt's bedside in the earliest days of her illness, she began to arrange a collection of flowers which she had been gathering on the journey; and when after her aunt's death we went to Albano for a few weeks' rest, she found great relief in botanical studies, and in analyzing and pressing the spring flowers found there.

We went on to Naples, returned to Florence and Rome for a short time, and spent the summer in Switzerland. Here Margaret found great delight in Alpine excursions. We always walked over all the passes which were inaccessible to carriages. Mrs. Channing and her daughter were with us; and while the elders took frequent rests, the girls had opportunity for gathering flowers. We found that by allowing about one third more time than Baedeker did, we could accomplish the day's journey without serious fatigue. In this way we went over the Grimsel, the Gemmi Pass, ascended from Lauterbrunnen to Mürren, and from Zermatt to the Gornergrat, beside other shorter excursions. Margaret and her friend Eva went up Piz Languard and to the Jardin at Chamounix. Margaret was brave and adventurous, but never rash. She enjoyed these excursions fully, and was in fine health and vigor from this open-air life. She made a collection of Alpine flowers of great interest.

Leaving the rest of the party, we went with our friend Miss Lobdell to Spain, where Margaret had a feast of enjoyment in the glorious Murillos, in the Moorish architecture, in the quaint life of the people, and the novelty of all the surroundings. A few weeks in Paris, of which she was very fond, gave her the opportunity of seeing the Exposition, of go-

ing up in a "captive balloon," and of revisiting the Louvre. Among her great enjoyments abroad was the church music. Her religious feeling found expression in it apart from all considerations of dogma.

We sailed from Liverpool for home Oct. 17, 1878. After short visits to friends, and household preparations, Margaret devoted herself to a fern-table at the Hospital Fair, and then resumed her work at the Institute. Her cousin Frank Cheney became a member of the household and entered the Institute, which gave her great pleasure. Her studies were in Chemistry, Biology, Botany, and Metallurgy.

She was much interested in the idea of instructing children in science, especially in the public schools. In 1879 and 1880 she gave courses of lessons in Botany to classes of children, under the auspices of the Eliot School, Jamaica Plain; and in the spring of 1880 she gave lessons at Miss Wesselhoeft's school. In these lessons she endeavored to carry out the plan of teaching children directly from natural objects.

In the autumn of 1879 she had a class of her little cousins at South Manchester in the elements of Chemistry. She illustrated the action of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon, lime, etc., and explained the effects of fermentation and combustion. The children were very much interested, as their abstracts show. She gave them the first idea of chemical nomenclature, and one little fellow for a long time spoke of water as H_2 O. He telephoned to her one day: "What is the symbol for air?" Two little lads came in one day much delighted at having collected C O_2 from the bung-hole of a barrel of new cider.

She prepared a paper on "The Growth of a Plant," which she read before the workingwomen of Providence, under the direction of Mrs. Churchill. They were much delighted with it, and she was asked to read it elsewhere; but she did not

feel ready to give much time to lecturing while so busy with her studies, and also wished to make the paper more complete. She once read a short paper at the New England Women's Club, on Scientific Women. She had engaged to give a course of lessons in the public schools on Mineralogy; and one of her last conscious cares was to ask me to write to Miss Crocker, expressing her regret at having to give it up.

In May, 1878, a number of young women formed a scientific club, for mutual improvement. They met once a month for the reading of papers and discussion of their work. Margaret joined this association in October, 1878, and was warmly interested in it, and deeply attached to the friends whom similarity of taste had thus united. She became its secretary, in May, 1879. The subjects assigned to her for study were, "The Plants in Action, their Organs and their Function," and "Vascular Cryptogamy." In October, 1881, she gave to the Society an "Account of a Fernery;" and in February, 1882, she read "Some Notes on the Useful Plants of the Various Orders." In 1879 and again in 1881 she attended the summer course of lessons in Botany at Cambridge. Her cousin Mary, whose companionship made study delightful, went with her the first summer; but her interest did not flag without it the second year. Professor Goodale's note will show his opinion of her work there. She enjoyed the hour of lunch, when they sat under a tree and had pleasant conversation.

In 1880 she became a member of the Society to Encourage Studies at home, and was a correspondent of the Science Department, under the direction of Mrs. Richards. Her first correspondent was Mrs. C., of Virginia. The sympathy which Margaret felt for this lady in a severe bereavement gave her a special interest in the correspondence. She was rejoiced to find that botanical studies interested her pupil and helped to soothe her grief, and was indefatigable in aid-

ing her choice of reading, and in sending her specimens and microscopic slides. Her letters to this pupil are the most interesting part of her correspondence; for they show the spirit of love and religion in which she carried out the study of Nature. She writes once: "When you study a plant, first look at it and enjoy its beauty, then analyze it." No one could see her study a flower and think "the picking to pieces" was anything but a reverent unfolding of the outer covers to reveal the hidden life and beauty. She had a few other pupils for short periods, but none whom she enjoyed so much.

She was elected a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the meeting in Boston in 1880. She joined the New England Women's Club at an early date, and was always a believer in Woman Suffrage, being interested in all movements for woman's education and advancement.

In the autumn of 1881 she attended Professor Wing's lectures on Organic Chemistry, and worked in the laboratory until the close of the term in February. She had great delight in the theory as well as the practice of chemistry, and loved to explain to me its symbolism and arrangement of combinations.

In February, 1882, we left home with her Cousin Frank to join her Uncle Frank's family in California. We left February 20, and returned June 20. The journey was full of interest and pleasure. She especially enjoyed the marvellous flora of that region, and made a collection of flowers of great interest and value.[1]

The trips to Southern California, to the Geysers, and to the Yosemite were full of excitement and interest. The

[1] She had begun the classification and arrangement of this collection, which was completed in the most perfect manner by the kindness and skill of Miss S. Minns.

death of her Uncle Rush called the party home a little prematurely, but Margaret had a rich store of memories. A week was spent in South Manchester, and then she returned to her own quiet home in Jamaica Plain. Here she passed two rich and happy months. She was preparing her California specimens, and also arranging a collection of her Uncle John's engravings in a new book. She devoted the morning hours to the microscope, carrying on the study of the embryology of the Plantain family, which she had begun under Professor Goodale's guidance, and for which she had gathered specimens in California. She often called me to look at something beautiful under the microscope.

The return of her friends the Channings brightened the summer. She went with her cousins to the Memorial Service to Mr. Emerson at Concord, visited his grave, and took tea at the Old Manse. Never had she seemed in better health or spirits; never was life more rich and beautiful to herself or more precious to her friends. August 22 we went to the meeting of the Scientific Association at Montreal. She enjoyed the discussions and the social meetings, the trips to Ottawa and Quebec, and especially a day passed at the farm with Mrs. Anne Jack, whom we had known through the Society for Studies at Home. We returned home September 1. September 4 we went to Magnolia for a few weeks of refreshment. She appeared well and vigorous, engaging for a few days in all the pleasures of the place, — driving, bathing, tennis, and bowling. On her birthday, September 8, she said she was thankful for her life, as she always felt.

She was taken ill September 12. Dr. Gill, her cousin, saw her September 14, and at once thought it was an attack of typhoid fever so violent as to leave little hope of recovery. Dr. Bell and Dr. Wesselhoeft held the same opinion. Delirium and wandering soon appeared, but after the first

few days she had little conscious suffering. She remembered dear friends as long as she was conscious. We had every possible help and kindness from our hosts. She died without a sign, on the morning of September 22, the brain being paralyzed. The funeral services at her home were held on Sunday, the 24th, by James Freeman Clarke. The body was taken to South Manchester and laid in the old burial-ground beside her father. In the repose of death her features were of angelic beauty.

There are many daguerrotypes and photographs made at intervals during her whole life, the latest one by Hardy, taken for the graduating class at the Institute. It is a clear, good photograph, but rather prosaic, with no artistic effect; a standing one, taken in Florence, is generally preferred. From this, Mr. George Fuller made the portrait, the last one he ever finished, which was completed Jan. 1, 1884. He was an old friend of her father, and performed his work with the greatest tenderness and reverence. He had the assistance of suggestion and criticism from Mr. Kimberley, who had known her from babyhood. The picture does not give quite the richness and fulness of activity which struck every one who saw her in her outdoor life, but it is very true to her more contemplative aspect, and gives the tender love and thought, and the unconsciousness of self which was so marked a characteristic. Mothers often said of her, "She is just what I wish my daughters to be." Her unconsciousness was one of her rarest traits. She liked affection and attention, but had no coquetry in her nature. After her death, I was told of her great influence over the young men of her acquaintance, in giving them the highest standard of purity and respect for woman.

Soon after Margaret's death some of her friends, especially those interested in her scientific work, proposed a memorial of

her in the institution where she studied so long, and in which she was so deeply interested, — the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It took the form of a reading-room for the use of the women students of the Institute, — a quiet place where they could rest or study in the intervals between their lectures or hours of work. The trustees kindly offered a sufficient room in a building then in process of erection for laboratory purposes. It was fitted up and furnished, and is kept in order by her friends, and named the Margaret Cheney Reading-Room. It has proved a very useful as well as delightful arrangement for the women who are enjoying the benefit of this noble institution.

The following portion of a note from Professor Goodale to Miss Curtis will show the estimation in which Margaret was held by her teachers: —

It will give me very great pleasure to look over the drawings made by Miss Cheney, and it shall be my endeavor to utilize a part of them in my book; for I should be most happy to let others know what I have known so long, — how thoroughly careful, honest, and good her work was. . . .

Miss Cheney's death is a great affliction to us all, for we had learned to appreciate her noble qualities of mind and her sweet character. It will always be a pleasure to me that I was so fortunate as to know her well. You are aware that much of the work which I have asked our pupils to do is irksome at first, and unattractive at best; but I do not remember that our friend ever betrayed the slightest annoyance or impatience under the provocation of very tedious tasks. Her equanimity always made others feel ashamed of their impatience. I wish I could write Mrs. Cheney some note which would convey my sincere sympathy and an expression of the great loss which we have all sustained. . . .

Yours very faithfully,

G. L. Goodale.

Cambridge, October 12.

Extract from a Notice by Mrs. Mary Bushnell Cheney.

In her unconventional ways and in many of her childish tastes she resembled a boy. She loved to dig, to row, to take care of hens, to whittle, to play jackstones, to use tools, to run, to swim, to *live*. In the child's pocket were marbles, chips, and knives, and later she was always methodically equipped with pocket-lens, pencil, and penknife. Her watch kept time, and so did she. She was a good traveller, and could plan and execute the details of a journey for a large party. The practical had a strong development in her. At the same time she was thoroughly and beautifully feminine. She could sew or cook, or care for a child or a sick friend as well and as gladly as she could use the microscope, drive a nail, play tennis, or work in the laboratory. Her voice was low and gentle, her manner retiring and artless in its freedom from self-consciousness. She loved the society of her elders and of little children, and was a true and devoted comrade to the few chosen friends of her own age, but in what is called society was less at home. Perhaps social ambition and the desire to shine were unknown to her; but she loved to minister to the sick and sorrowful, and to be useful at home, and she did not think of self in sacrificing self. Her deep reserve, the truth and constancy of her affections, her maiden purity, and the calmness of her religious trust were all legible in the shining of her beautiful eyes. Never was a gentler, more unselfish and womanly woman, never a girl more simple and honest, never a mind more open to truth in its many shapes or more ready for its service.

Extracts from Letters to Mrs. C.

October 26, 1880.

My dear Mrs. C., — Miss Minns has sent me your letter requesting me to correspond with you in the Botany course. It seems to me that botany is a good science to begin with, because the illustrations can be found so easily in one's daily life. It is simpler than zoölogy, and so better to begin with. As you say you have never studied this subject at all, I should advise you to read first, Gray's little book, "How Plants Grow." I enclose an adver-

tisement of it. Afterwards, I think you had best take Gray's "New Text Book of Botany." Try, as far as possible, to get specimens to illustrate what you read, — leaves, flowers, etc. I would plant some seeds as soon as possible, so as to have seedlings to compare with the figures in the book.

Peas, beans, morning-glories, corn, wheat, barley, etc., are good. I will send you a few pine-seeds, as they are difficult to get, and illustrate one kind of embryo. Plant these seeds at intervals of a few days or a week, so as to have seedlings in various stages of growth. Compare these with seeds of the same kind merely soaked, and make out the correspondence of the parts of one and the other. I should like you to make drawings of these, indicating the corresponding parts. It is most useful to make these drawings, as it fixes the object more strongly in the mind. These may be mere outlines, or, if (as you seem interested in art) perhaps you draw also, you may like to make more elaborate drawings. When you send me your memory notes, please enclose a few of the sketches.

I hope you will find this study interesting, as I have no doubt you will, especially if you teach it to your little boy as you go along, which will be very pleasant both for him and you. It seems to me very young children may be made to take an interest in flowers and learn about them, if taught in the right way; that is, from the flowers themselves.

If I have omitted any explanations that you need in beginning your study, please let me know, and I will do my best to make it clear and easy for you.

Yours very truly,

MARGARET S. CHENEY.

JAMAICA PLAIN, April 19, 1881.

I think you would enjoy Kerner's "Flowers and Their Unbidden Guests," and I would advise you to read that next. If you cannot get that, Darwin's "Forms of Flowers" is a charming book.

Your letter was fragrant with the violet you sent. I enclose a little wall-flower, of which I am very fond, it is so fragrant. I en-

close also a thin section of oak wood, which shows the medullary rays, the rings of annual growth, and the ducts in the wood.

Horse-chestnut buds, or apple-tree branches, or pussy willows, if kept in winter, will often open in the house, and at least you can study the buds and see them in their winter garments.

I was very glad to hear from you, but sorry to learn of your great loss. I can understand how hard it must be for you to do anything; but it seems to me that natural science is very soothing and cheering, one can put so much love into it. I think the more one studies and becomes acquainted with flowers, the more one loves them. "Familiarity" with them certainly "does not breed contempt."

I am glad you enjoyed Wallace's "Tropical Nature." I think it is a beautiful book. He writes so lovingly and religiously about everything. He always seems to seek the truth, state it plainly and yet beautifully. I enjoyed his travels in the Amazon and Rio Negro very much. . . .

May 14, 1881.

I wonder why you think I do not believe in the theory of evolution? It seems to me to be a very useful working hypothesis, and has thrown wonderful light upon natural science. I do not believe that we yet fully understand the phenomena that it attempts to explain; but that it has done a great good, and will become more and more demonstrated, I certainly do believe.

That one is necessarily a Materialist because one believes in evolution, I do not admit; for, granting that all our animals and plants have been evolved from one original form, there must always be something behind that. We do not yet understand what this power of *life* is.

I think the only way to become familiar with the botanical names of plants is to analyze as many as you can, and try and remember them. Of course, it is impossible to remember a great many, but some will stick by you, and gradually you will learn more and more. I would press and name each flower as you analyze it, and so you will get a collection that you can refer to.

I have enjoyed corresponding with you very much this winter, and should be very glad to continue next winter.

November 28, 1881.

I send you by same mail a few microscopic slides. They are not well mounted, and I feel rather ashamed to send them. But they are simpler than the others I have, and so I would rather you would try them first. I would get with your microscope either an inch and one-quarter inch objective, or a three-fourths and one-fifth inch objective. Either of these pairs makes a useful combination. It is generally best to look first with the lower power, — the inch objective, for example, — then with the higher. When you have taken a general view of the object, choose a clear, thin place where the cells are distinct, and make a sketch of what you can see in the field.

Do not attempt to draw the whole object if it is too large for the field. Take pains to accustom yourself to look with both eyes open; it is very important, and if you begin at first it is soon learned. If you shut one eye it is much more likely to make your eyes ache, because it is an effort to keep it shut. Do not work too long at once. An hour at a time, to begin with, is enough, and two hours is enough at any time or for any one. Have your microscope stand high enough so that when the stand is slightly tipped back you can easily look through it without stooping. Have plenty of light (if you can get it); not direct sunlight, as a general thing.

Do not be disappointed if the objects do not look exactly like the picture in the book; they often do not, because the pictures are often more magnified, and they are chosen from many specimens; and the best specimen is of course drawn. Please send me some of your drawings.

I would begin with No. 9, pollen, and then I would take some pollen of any flowers you may happen to have, and look at that. Pollen is formed of simple cells, and so will be simple to begin with. Next, take No. 4, pith. This is simply cells, and is the simplest form of cellular tissue parenchyma. Do not be deceived by air-bubbles. In this specimen you will see lots of black-looking things, round, with a light spot in the middle; they are air-bubbles, and are there only because it is not well mounted. . . .

I hope you will succeed well with the microscope; it is rather hard in the beginning, I think, not to have some one to show you how. If you want any more information about the use of it, please let me know, and I will help you all I can.

February 11, 1882.

I am very sorry that you have been ill again. You do seem to have such a hard time, and you are a wonder to me that you can study at all, while you are so ill.

I hope you will enjoy the ferns, and I meant you to keep them all, for I have plenty more, and these are duplicates. I only don't want you to work too hard on them. Begin by admiring their beauty, which I am sure you do, and then study them, a few at a time. Please keep the slides, for I do not want them at present; and as we are going away soon, I had rather not have them sent here.

We are going, a week from Monday, to California for about five months. I shall always have letters forwarded from here, and so you had better continue to direct to me here, as we may be moving around, there. I shall try to send you some ferns from there, which may interest you; and I shall hope to hear from you just the same. . . .

I wish I could send you some health and strength, but I can only send my good wishes.

Santa Barbara, Cal., March 19, 1882.

I wish I could send you some of the beauty and enjoyment of this lovely place. We have had a week of rain, but now it has cleared off, and the hills are covered with green grass and lovely flowers. I find it hard work to press all the flowers I find. I have not found many ferns yet, for it has been too wet to go on the hills.

I am glad you have enjoyed the slides, and hope you will continue to work with the microscope as much as you can. Have you a "camera lucida" with your microscope? I think you might find it a help in drawing. It is a little fussy to use at first, but is very useful when you get used to it. . . .

I have been very much interested in a cliff on the beach here, which is full of little shells and corals. It seems to be an old beach, or bottom of the sea, and between layers of harder rock are strata of soft mud filled with shells.

It is lovely to have the flowers and trees all out in March. The eucalyptus-tree is very common here; it grows very rapidly, and is used as a shade tree. The pepper-tree is also very abundant. We have oranges and limes in abundance.

MARGARET S. CHENEY.

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